

NEWS

For Immediate Release

United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest Service

Cibola National Forest
Sandia Ranger District
11776 Hwy. 337
Tijeras, NM 87059

Tel: (505) 281-3304
Fax: (505) 281-1176



Expect Smoke in the Sandia Ranger District Next Week

We Will Continue Implementing Talking Talons and Hondo Prescribed Burn As Weather Allows

TIJERAS, NM, January 24, 2013– Sandia Ranger District will be continuing with the implementation of the Talking Talons and Hondo prescribed burn weather permitting next week January 28, 2013. The fuel condition during this season is showing favorable weather in the next month to support safe burning program. The Talking Talon burn area is located one mile south of I-40 and the Zuzax exit south of Hwy 333 (Route 66). The Hondo Prescribed burn is located west of Hwy 14, in the Cedar Crest area on the forest. The Talking Talons and Hondo Prescribe Burn are a continuation of a fuels reduction program on the Sandia Ranger District. When weather and conditions support the project we will continue treating a small number of acres per day. The total project area is 700 acres.

We will notify the public and media daily as to the plans for the day. You can follow the updates for our Prescribe Burning program at EMIFPA Facebook site at the end of this release. You do not need to be a member of Facebook to go to this site.

Frequent low intensity fires are natural and necessary components of a healthy forest. This ecosystem depends on fire to promote new vegetation, enhance habitat and reduce the threat of large fire. It improves public and firefighter safety by reducing the accumulated fuels that could otherwise contribute to more intense fire behavior under hotter/drier conditions. The broadcast prescribed burning process applies low intensity fire across the forest floor to consume small debris and ground litter.

All prescribed fire activity is dependent on personnel availability, weather (including winds, ventilation, and approval from the New Mexico Smoke Management. The project and approval for the project is also based upon specific assessments, agency guidelines and safety protocols. During this burn, managers will continuously monitor weather conditions, including wind, temperature, and relative humidity. Fuel conditions including fuel moisture and the quantity of fuels are also measured. Smoke will be visible and expected to have variable affects to neighboring communities.

Fire managers make every effort to minimize smoke impacts to the communities while continuing to address the critical need to reduce the risk of severe wildfires around those communities. Tactics to keep smoke impacts as minimal as possible include canceling approved burns when conditions

aren't favorable, finding alternative uses for the debris in slash piles, timing daytime ignitions to allow the majority of smoke time to disperse prior to settling overnight, and burning larger sections at a time when conditions are favorable to reduce the overall number of days smoke is in the area.

In addition, the Sandia Ranger District coordinates prescribed fire plans with our partners in the county, city and state, as well as neighboring districts, to reduce the impact of smoke on the communities.

The public can obtain additional prescribed fire information via the following:

- Cibola National Forest: www.fs.usda.gov/cibola
- Smoke Management go to <http://nmfireinfo.com/smoke-management/> or http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb/SMP/smp_index.html
- Sign-up for regular email notifications and updates of planned burns and wildfires: ktakai@fs.fed.us
- <http://www.facebook.com/pages/East-Mountain-Interagency-Fire-Protection-Association-EMIFPA/328452040510310>

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